

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

accessing one or more terms associated with one or more nodes of a network;

encrypting the accessed one or more terms;

receiving an encrypted search term from a user of a remote device;

access the storage unit to retrieve one or more of the encrypted accessed terms in

response to receiving the encrypted search term from the user of the remote device;

comparing the received encrypted search term with at least a portion of the retrieved one or more encrypted accessed terms; and

providing a result of the comparison to the user.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein encrypting comprises encrypting the accessed one or more terms using a same encryption algorithm as that employed to encrypt the search term.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein encrypting comprises encrypting the accessed terms using at least one of a one-way hash function and an asymmetric encryption algorithm.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein accessing comprises accessing the one or more terms contained in one or more hypertext markup files stored in one or more workstations coupled to the network.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprises storing the encrypted accessed terms in a database and wherein comparing comprises comparing the received encrypted search term with at least a portion of the encrypted accessed terms stored in the database.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein providing the result comprises providing at least a portion of the accessed terms that substantially match the search term.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising storing the accessed terms in a first database and storing the encrypted accessed terms in a second database, and further comprising providing the user an option to search the first database or the second database.

8. (Currently Amended) An article comprising one or more machine-readable storage media containing instructions that when executed enable a processor to:

access one or more terms associated with one or more remote files over a network;

encrypt the accessed one or more terms;

receive an encrypted search term from a user of a remote device;

access the storage unit to retrieve one or more of the encrypted accessed terms in

response to receiving the encrypted search term from the user of the remote device;

compare the received encrypted search term with the retrieved one or more encrypted accessed terms; and

provide a result of the comparison to the user.

9. (Original) The article of claim 8, wherein the network is the Internet, and wherein the instructions when executed enable the processor to encrypt the accessed terms using a same algorithm utilized to encrypt the search term.

10. (Original) The article of claim 9, wherein the instructions when executed enable the processor to encrypt the accessed terms using at least one of a one-way hash function and an asymmetric algorithm.

11. (Original) The article of claim 8, wherein the instructions when executed enable the processor to store the encrypted accessed terms in a database and to compare the received encrypted search term with at least a portion of the encrypted accessed terms stored in the database.

12. (Original) The article of claim 8, wherein the instructions when executed enable the processor to access one or more websites associated with one or more processor-based systems that are communicatively coupled to the Internet and to provide the results of at least a portion of the accessed terms that match the search term.

13. (Original) The article of claim 8, wherein the instructions when executed enable the processor to store the accessed terms in a first database, store the encrypted accessed terms in a second database, and provide the user an option to search the first database or the second database.

14. (Original) The article of claim 8, wherein the instructions when executed enable the processor to access one or more terms associated with one or more remote hypertext markup language files over a network.

15. (Currently Amended) An apparatus, comprising:

a storage unit; and

a control unit communicatively coupled to the storage unit, the control unit adapted to:

access one or more terms associated with one or more remote files over a
network;

store the accessed one or more terms in the storage unit;

encrypt the stored one or more terms;

receive an encrypted search term from a user of a remote device;

access the storage unit to retrieve one or more of the encrypted accessed terms in
response to receiving the encrypted search term from the user of the
remote device;

compare the received encrypted search term with the retrieved one or more
encrypted accessed terms; and

provide a result of the comparison over the network.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the control unit is adapted to encrypt the accessed one or more terms using a same encryption algorithm as that employed to encrypt the search term.

17. (Original) The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the control unit is adapted to encrypt the accessed terms using at least one of a one-way hash function and an asymmetric encryption algorithm.

18. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the apparatus is an Internet web server comprising a World Wide Web search engine module;

wherein the control unit is adapted to access the one or more terms contained in one or more hypertext markup files stored in one or more workstations coupled to the network, wherein the network is the Internet; and

wherein the storage unit stores a data-collection program, that when executed, enables the control unit to build and maintain a database of encrypted accessed terms found on the one or more hypertext markup files.

19. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the control unit is further adapted ~~to store the encrypted accessed terms in a database and to compare the received encrypted search term with at least a portion of the encrypted accessed terms stored in the database.~~

20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the control unit is adapted to provide the result that includes at least a portion of the accessed terms that substantially match the search term, and wherein the control unit is further adapted to store the accessed terms in a first database, store the encrypted accessed terms in a second database, and provide the user an option to search the first database or the second database.